

Inspection of St Stephen and All Martyrs' CofE School, Lever Bridge

Radcliffe Road, Bolton, Lancashire BL2 1NZ

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 January 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel valued at this school regardless of their differences. They appreciate the importance of treating everyone with respect and care. Pupils benefit from the positive relationships that they enjoy with each other and with staff. Pupils told inspectors that they trust staff to help them if they have any concerns. This makes pupils feel safe and happy in school.

Leaders and staff are ambitious for all pupils to be successful academically and personally. Pupils are resilient. They understand that making mistakes is part of learning. Staff apply the behaviour policy consistently well. As a result, learning is rarely disturbed by disruptive behaviour. This allows pupils to learn without interruption.

There are effective systems in place to identify bullying. On the rare occasions that bullying occurs, leaders deal with it quickly.

Pupils benefit from taking on additional responsibilities in school. For example, they act as safety ambassadors, who lead school assemblies. Members of the ethos team debate issues relevant to the school and its pupils. Pupil librarians oversee the running of the school community library that is open to families each day. Such opportunities build pupils' confidence and prepare them well for life beyond the classroom.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

In the majority of subjects, leaders have established a curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have identified the important knowledge that pupils should learn and when this should be delivered by teachers. In the Reception Year, leaders have identified what children should learn so that they are ready for the demands of Year 1.

Leaders ensure that teachers benefit from appropriate, ongoing training. This helps to develop their subject knowledge so that they are well equipped to teach across different subjects. Teachers introduce new learning to pupils effectively. They check what pupils know and remember from previous lessons. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to revisit prior concepts when needed, before moving on to new learning. Over time, this helps pupils know more and remember more.

In one or two subjects, the knowledge that pupils should learn is not as obvious to teachers as it is in most other subjects. As a result, some staff are unclear about what subject content they should teach or when this should be taught. This hinders pupils from building up their knowledge securely over time.

Leaders place a high priority on children in the Reception Year and pupils in key stage 1 developing a secure knowledge of phonics. Leaders ensure that staff deliver

the phonics programme consistently well. Staff monitor pupils' understanding of phonics closely. There is timely extra support for pupils who need it. This helps them to keep up with their peers. As a result, pupils quickly begin to learn the sounds that letters represent.

Leaders ensure that pupils read books which are closely matched to the sounds that they are learning. Children in the Reception Year enjoy different books every day. Pupils in key stage 1 read regularly. Many pupils become confident and fluent readers by the end of Year 2. Pupils in key stage 2 access a range of high-quality texts that include novels and non-fiction. They read widely and often. Leaders promote reading well across the school. Many pupils regularly experience the pleasure that comes from reading a book.

There are effective systems in place to identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers are successful in adapting how they deliver learning to pupils with SEND. Teachers ensure that pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as their peers. Leaders work effectively with external organisations to secure additional support in a timely manner. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve well.

Pupils regularly display good manners. They do their best to treat others in the same way that they would like to be treated themselves.

Pupils experience an exemplary range of opportunities that enhance their personal development. Leaders and staff are committed to ensuring that pupils become well-rounded individuals, who understand the important role that they play in society. Pupils enjoy a rich variety of trips. These include visits to different places of worship, museums, galleries and places of historical significance. Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils access the same wealth of experiences as others in the school.

Governors focus on achieving the best possible outcomes for all pupils. They support and challenge leaders well. Leaders and governors are considerate of staff's workload and well-being when making decisions about policies and procedures.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff follow clear procedures to report any concerns that they have about a pupil. Leaders respond to any concerns in a timely manner. They work well with other professionals and external organisations, when required.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn about the dangers that they may face. For example, pupils recognise the hazards of open water and the risks associated with fire. They learn how to protect themselves from harm when working and playing online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In one or two subjects, leaders have not identified the key knowledge that pupils, including children in the early years, should learn or when this content should be taught. This prevents teachers from designing learning that builds up pupils' knowledge over time. Leaders should ensure that they finalise their curriculum thinking in these areas, so that pupils can build on prior knowledge when they are learning something new.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	105217
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10256085
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Marcus Chester
Headteacher	Rebecca Unsworth
Website	www.ssam.bolton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 May 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a voluntary-aided primary school. It is part of the Diocese of Manchester. Its last section 48 inspection took place in May 2016.
- Leaders use registered alternative provision for some pupils.
- The governing body operates a breakfast club and after-school club.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors completed deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and art and design. As part of the deep dives, the inspectors met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited lessons, met with teachers and looked at children's and pupils' work. The inspectors also looked at the

curriculum and pupils' work in some other curriculum subjects. The lead inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.

- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other school leaders and members of staff.
- An inspector spoke with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors. An inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese.
- Inspectors checked the arrangements for keeping pupils safe. They reviewed a range of documentation and spoke to leaders and staff. Inspectors also spoke to pupils about whether they felt safe in school.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at social times. They spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school. Inspectors also considered the views of pupils shared through Ofsted's pupil survey.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. Inspectors also considered the views of staff shared through Ofsted's staff survey.
- An inspector spoke with parents and carers. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text responses.

Inspection team

David Robinson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Wendy Tracey

Ofsted Inspector

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